Other Strangeness
Chapter 1
Revenge of the Vampire Dimension

NEW YORK CITY, 1999
Jim Hanley's
UNIVERSE
Comic Books

EMPIRE STATE

'SCUSE ME.

UH, HI. I'M BERNARD FISCHER. I HAVE A 9:30 APPOINTMENT WITH ATOMIC ROBO.

OF COURSE, DR. FISCHER. HAVE A SEAT, PLEASE.

ER, THANKS.

REX CANNON. I HAVE A 9:30 WITH ROBO.

OH, AH. PLEASE, HAVE A SEAT.

JERRY, GET THE LAWRENCE LIVERMOORE PEOPLE ON THE HORN AND LET THEM KNOW WE'VE RUN INTO A SLIGHT DELAY RE: THEIR LASERS.

EMPHASIZE "SLIGHT" SO THEY DON'T HAVE A HEART ATTACK.

YESSIR.

AND SEND IN MY 9:30.

ABOUT THAT, I'M AFRAID YOU'RE DOUBLE-BOOKED.

HMM, I'VE GOT THAT BRIEFING AT **TEN** FOR TOMORROW'S TRIP TO JAPAN. BETTER SEND THEM BOTH IN.

GENTLEMEN, IF YOU'LL FOLLOW ME.

C.E.O. DR. TESLA

ROBO, YOUR 9:30S.

THANK YOU, JERRY. GENTLEMEN, HAVE A SEAT.

I APOLOGIZE FOR THIS, BUT WE'RE A LITTLE RUSHED AROUND HERE TODAY. LET'S GET STARTED, SHALL WE? WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOURSELF, DOCTOR... **CANNON**, IS IT?

REX CANNON.

GOOD NAME.

WELL, IN ADDITION TO MY MARINE AND SEAL TRAINING, I HOLD THREE PHDS. INTERESTING STORY: ONE OF THEM IS IN A FIELD SO ADVANCED IT DOESN'T HAVE A NAME YET.

ADVANCED [OTHER]?

OH, NO. IT'S AN OFF-SHOOT. META_____.

IMPRESSIVE. DR. FISCHER, IS IT?

OH. UH, MY, WELL, WHAT I DO IS PALEONTOLOGY. PALEOBOTANY. THAT SORT OF THING.

MHMM.

UH, AND Y'KNOW. SOME GEOLOGY IN THERE TOO.

I WON'T LIE TO YOU. ACTION SCIENCE IS **DANGEROUS** WORK. WE'RE AT THE EDGE OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE AND, LET ME TELL YOU, IT'S A HELL OF A PRECIPICE.

APPLICANTS **RARELY** APPRECIATE THE SCOPE OF WHAT THEY'RE GETTING INTO. IN FACT, THE POSITION YOU'RE INTERVIEWING FOR TODAY BECAME AVAILABLE DUE TO SCIENTIFIC CATASTROPHE.

DEFINE "SCIENTIFIC **CATASTROPHE**".

IN **THIS** CASE? DELPHI AGENTS AND A VOLCANO.

WHAT WERE YOU **DOING** AT A VOLCANO?

ACTION GEOLOGY.

OKAY, YOU KNOW WHAT? UH, IT'S BEEN GREAT, REALLY, THANKS FOR HAVING ME. BUT, SEE, I ONLY APPLIED BECAUSE MY MOM'S LOCAL, AND SHE--

SKROOM

AUGH!

JERRY, CANCEL MY APPOINTMENTS.

BUT ROBO--

FULL LOCKDOWN. WE'VE GOT VAMPIRES.

WRRRRR

VAMPIRES?!

I TRUST YOU'RE FAMILIAR WITH THE MANY-WORLDS INTERPRETATION OF QUANTUM MECHANICS.

UH, YEAH.

WRRRRR

FWAM

WELL, TESLA AND I FOUND ONE BACK IN THE '30S, AND IT'S FILLED WITH VAMPIRES. HERE, TAKE A GUN.

WHAT'S THIS FOR?

REMAIN CALM TRUST IN SCIENCE

REMAIN C TRUST IN SC

THOOM

SHOOTING MONSTERS. YOU'RE HIRED.

IF THEY'RE ***VAMPIRES,*** JUST OPEN THE WINDOWS AGAIN. IT'S MORNING.

THEY'RE NOT **LITERALLY** VAMPIRES. SUNLIGHT, GARLIC, CROSSES, NONE OF THAT APPLIES. BUT WE CALL THEM VAMPIRES BECAUSE THEY'RE AGELESS SUPER STRONG MONSTERS THAT FEED ON THE BLOOD OF THE LIVING.

THIS IS NOT A DRILL. TESLADYNE FACILITIES ARE NOW UNDER QUARANTINE.

AN OMEGA LEVEL BIOHAZARD HAS BEEN RELEASED WITHIN THE BUILDING. PLEASE REMAIN CALM.

FOR YOUR SAFETY, PLEASE KEEP ALL DOORS SECURELY LOCKED, STAY OUT OF HALLWAYS, AND AWAIT FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS. THIS IS NOT A DRILL.

WE'RE IN LOCKDOWN TO CONTAIN THEM.

SO, WE'RE **TRAPPED.**

OH, NO. WE'RE NOT TRAPPED IN HERE WITH THEM. THEY'RE TRAPPED IN HERE WITH **JENKINS.**

WHAT'S A JENKINS?

JENKINS

HSSSSS!

CRACK!

SCRUNCH

mrrf!

FWACK

KRRCHK

FIRE

I'LL SEARCH FOR OTHERS. BARRICADE THE DOORS. LET NOTHING THROUGH.

"JENKINS IS...WELL, HE'S ON **OUR** SIDE. YOU'LL COME TO APPRECIATE THAT."

READY?

WHAT?! YOU WANT TO GO *OUT* THERE?

NOT REALLY. THESE THINGS ARE GROSS. Y'KNOW THEY TRY TO CHEW ON ME LIKE I'M ALIVE? I DON'T NEED THAT. BUT SOMEONE'S GOT TO STOP THEM.

JERRY?

ONLINE, ROBO.

GOT ANYTHING FOR ME?

THERE WAS AN ACTIVE HEIM-DROESCHER EXPERIMENT IN LAB 3B CONCURRENT TO THE VAMPIRE INCIDENT. I'M LOOKING AT THE VIDEO HERE. IF THAT'S NOT WHERE THEY'RE COMING FROM, IT'S DAMN CLOSE.

LAB 3B? PERFECT. STAY SAFE.

WE'LL BREACH, HEAD TO THE STAIRS AT THE END OF--

I'M NOT GOING OUT THERE.

WELL, YOU'RE WELCOME TO STAY IN **HERE**, BUT HOW LONG DO YOU THINK THE DESK IS GOING TO HOLD **THEM** BACK?

GRAAA

HSSSS

WE MUST LEAVE HERE.

THREE, TWO...

AUGH!

OOF!

STOP-- DAMMIT!

STOP THAT. STOP BITING ME!

KWA-LAM

HSSSS!

HSSSS!

I'LL HOLD 'EM OFF, YOU SHOOT THEM.

UH, RIGHT.

HSSSS

I JUST GOT THAT DESK.

CRACK

THWAM

LET 'ER RIP, BERNARD!

DONK

AAAAAAHHHH!

BKOW BKOW

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

CLICK

KA-CLICK

CLICK

REMAIN CALM

TRUST SCIENCE

YOU MISSED!

WELL, THAT'S NOT FAIR. I MEAN, ***STATISTICALLY*** SPEAKING--

JUST RELOAD AND **TRY** TO KEEP THEM OFF OUR BACK. THERE'S AMMO IN MY POCKET.

UH...

PANTS POCKET?

ELSEWHERE...

OH GOD, OH GOD!

SQUELCH

KRAK

FIND A ROOM, WAIT IT OUT.

THERE'S *OTHERS!*

WE LOST RODRIGUEZ!

MILLER STAYED BEHIND SO WE COULD GET AWAY!

BRAKKABRAK

THEY'RE SURROUNDING US.

NOT FOR LONG.

WHAT'RE YOU DOING?

THIS.

A4

HUH.

LLNL FUSI
LASER LE
(DIAMO

Y'KNOW, SOME OF MY POST-GRAD WORK INVOLVED SELECTING DIAMONDS FOR SPECIALIZED LENSING PROCESSES. WE USED THEIR FACETS IN PLACE OF BEAM SPLITTERS.

DON'T STOP MOVING.

ER, SORRY.

OKAY, THIS IS WHERE THEY'RE COMING FROM. I'LL GO FIRST, DRAW THEIR ATTENTION, AND GET THEM AWAY FROM THE DOOR. YOU WILL COUNT TO **TEN**, AND THEN FOLLOW ME GUNS BLAZING. GOT IT?

83

GOT IT.

OKAY, WE'RE NEARLY THERE. WE CAN FIX THIS.

HOW?! YOU SAID THERE COULD BE **HUNDREDS** OF THESE VAMPIRE THINGS ALREADY. WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH BULLETS FOR THAT.

THAT'S WHY WE'RE HEADING FOR LAB 3B. THEY WERE DOING HEIM-DROESCHER WORK THERE--

--HYPERSPATIAL PROPULSION. THE VAMPIRE DIMENSION IS HYPERSPATIALLY "CLOSE" TO OURS, SO **SOMETHING** ABOUT THE EXPERIMENT LET THEM LEAK OVER.

ALL WE'VE GOT TO DO IS REVERSE THE EXPERIMENT'S PARTICLE FLOW AND THE VAMPIRES SHOULD RE-ALIGN TO THE QUANTUM FLAVOR OF THEIR OWN UNIVERSE. OTHER THAN THE DAMAGE AND HORROR, IT'LL BE LIKE THEY WERE NEVER HERE.

IT SOUNDS SO **SIMPLE** WHEN YOU SAY IT.

THESE THINGS USUALLY ARE.

"THESE" THINGS? **PLURAL?** HOW OFTEN DOES THIS **HAPPEN?**

OH, THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING WEIRD GOING ON. INVASIONS FROM THE VAMPIRE DIMENSION ARE PRETTY RARE THOUGH. I DOUBT YOU'LL LIVE TO SEE ANOTHER ONE.

LLNL FUS
LASER LE
(DIAMON

A4

DON'T PHRASE IT LIKE THAT. **PLEASE.**

LLNL FUSION LASER LENS (DIAMOND)

JENKINS?
ROBO.
SO. HOW YOU DOING?
WE'VE GOT VAMPIRES. TRACKED THEM HERE.
YEAH, THIS IS WHERE THEY'RE COMING FR--

TEN!
HANG ON.
BLAM BLAM BLAM

HANG IN THERE
KLZ
SPOW
PTANG

IF I'M READING THIS RIGHT, THE EFFECT THAT'S ALLOWING THEM ACCESS TO OUR UNIVERSE WORKS ON A TWO MINUTE CYCLE **AND** IT AFFECTS A WIDER RADIUS OF THEIR WORLD EVERY TIME. IT'LL EVENTUALLY BRING **MILLIONS** OF VAMPIRES TO OUR WORLD.

JUST TELL ME IT'S NOT LIKE THIS ***EVERY*** DAY.

RELAX. ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS REVERSE THE POLARITY AND EVERYTHING'LL GO BACK TO...NORMAL.

WHAT'S WRONG?

THERE **IS** NO REVERSE. HOW COULD THEY NOT INCLUDE A REVERSE?! THAT'S JUST CRIMINALLY NEGLIGENT WITH THE KIND OF **LUDICROUS** STUFF WE GET UP TO AROUND HERE!

SHUT IT OFF THEN.

IF WE DO THAT, WE'RE STUCK WITH AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF VAMPIRES CRAWLING AROUND. IT ONLY TAKES **ONE** TO TURN THE EARTH INTO A BARREN WASTELAND.

I CAN'T BELIEVE THERE'S NO **REVERSE!** OKAY, IT'S A MATTER OF COMPANY POLICY FROM NOW ON. YOU MUST BUILD A REVERSE POLARITY SETTING INTO ALL EXPERIMENTS.

I'VE GOT AN IDEA!

BERNARD!

BE RIGHT BACK.

INCOMING.

A4

LLNL FUSION LASER LENS (DIAMOND)

GUYS, I THINK I FIGURED IT...

...OUT?

AAAAHHHH!

GO!

SHHINNG

OH PLEASE, OH PLEASE, OH PLEASE

ALL SECTORS REPORTING. WE ARE VAMPIRE CLEAR.

THAT WAS SOME QUICK THINKING, BERNARD.

OH, IT WAS QUITE SIMPLE REALLY.

SEE, I NOTICED THE MACHINE USED A ***XENON*** LASER AND--

NOPE.

...WHAT?

YEAH, I DON'T KNOW ***WHAT*** THAT WAS, BUT I CAN PROMISE YOU IT ***WASN'T*** A XENON LASER. I'M NOT SURE WE EVEN ***OWN*** ONE.

SO...WAIT, WHAT? HOW DID THAT WORK THEN?
GOOD QUESTION. WORK UP A TREATMENT AND WE'LL GET YOU A LAB TO FIGURE IT OUT.
JERRY? YEAH, LET'S PREPARE THE STANDARD "FALSE ALARM" PRESS RELEASE. AND HAVE MY TEN O'CLOCK HELD DOWNSTAIRS, I'LL MEET HER DOWN THERE.
END

Other Strangeness
Chapter 2
Atomic Robo Big in Japan

TOKYO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 1999

ROBO

TOKYO ROBOTICS FAIR
SPECIAL GUE

BIG SCIENCE INCORPORATED

ATOMIC ROBO! IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG.

IT HAS, DR. YUMENO.

HOW IS JAPAN TREATING YOU?

LIKE ELVIS.

AND YOU DON'T EVEN SING!

BUT I CAN.

OH, ROBO. NO YOU CAN'T.

HEY, ISN'T YOUR WHOLE CULTURE BUILT OUT OF POLITENESS?

YES, BUT YOU'RE A FOREIGN DEVIL WHO IS TOO LAZY TO LEARN MY LANGUAGE, SO IT IS DIFFERENT.

I DON'T HAVE TO TAKE THAT KIND OF ABUSE FROM THE GUY DUMB ENOUGH TO RUN A CRACKERJACK OUTFIT LIKE THIS.

OH, YES. THEY SURVEYED ALL OF JAPAN, BUT THEY COULD NOT FIND ANOTHER PERSON FOOLISH ENOUGH TO ACCEPT THE POSITION.

THAT'S HOW I GOT STUCK WITH TESLADYNE.

WELL, I WON'T TELL IF YOU WON'T.

DEAL.

BING

ATOMIC ROBO, MEET THE NEW...

...SCIENCE TEAM SUPER FIVE!

DR. SHIMA KOUJI IS WORKING ON A PORTABLE, SCALABLE WATER FILTRATION AND RECYCLING SYSTEM FOR IMPOVERISHED AND DRought-STRICKEN AREAS.

AND DR. TACHIBANA SAYOKO. SHE'S ENGINEERING A PROGRAMMABLE VIRUS TO BUILD NANOMACHINES.

DR. TOKITA KOSAKU IS ON THE VERGE OF MODIFYING MOST STAPLE CROPS TO BE SUSTAINABLE ACROSS NEARLY ALL LATITUDES.

DR. HARUTA RYU. HE'S CURRENTLY DESIGNING PROBES TO SEARCH FOR EXO-BIOLOGY UNDER THE SURFACE OF EUROPA.

DR. OKITA HOKUTO IS ENGINEERING A NEW PHOTO-VOLTAIC TECHNIQUE TO QUADRUPLE THE EFFICIENCY OF SOLAR PANELS.

AND THOSE ARE ONLY OUR ***MAJOR*** PROJECTS.

YOU GUYS KEEP BUSY.

WE HAVE TO. THERE HAS NOT BEEN A ***SINGLE*** BIOMEGA ATTACK SINCE DR. SHINKA'S FINAL DEFEAT.

AND NOW YOU'RE THE JSDF'S "TIGER REPELLENT."

PRECISELY. OUR FUNDING MUST COME FROM PATENTS, ENDORSEMENTS, AND SUPER SCIENCE CONSULTING.

WELL, IF YOU CAN CONSULT UP A SOLUTION TO MY LASER PROBLEM, THEN TESLADYNE CAN--

WHOOOOOOP

UH, DO YOU GUYS HAVE A SECRET WORD, OR...?

WHOOOOOOP

<SYSTEMS ONLINE!>*

*TRANSLATED FROM JAPANESE.

<DIAGNOSTICS RUNNING!>

<ECHO STATIONS THREE THROUGH SIX CONFIRM SIGNAL!>

<SIGNAL IS CLEAR, NO LOCAL NOISE!>

<THAT'S TOKYO BAY...>

<DO WE HAVE EYE-IN-THE-SKY?>

<SYNCHRONIZING!>

OKAY...I CAN COME BACK LATER...?

<DIAGNOSTIC CHECKS OUT!>

BIOMEGA

SCIENCE TEAM SUPER FIVE: GUARDIAN MODE!

WHAT, FOR REAL?

THERE, DO YOU SEE? THEY ARE COMING OUT OF THE BAY. THESE ARE ONLY DRONES.

ARE YOU SURE?

I LIKE TO THINK I KNOW A FEW THINGS ABOUT BIOMEGA, ATOMIC ROBO.

"DOC, I DON'T WANT YOU TO TAKE THIS THE WRONG WAY, BUT HOW PREPARED ARE THEY?"

"THEY HAVE SPENT YEARS TRAINING FOR THIS--REVIEWING ALL AVAILABLE FOOTAGE, MEMORIZING EVERY TACTIC, AND ENDURING ENDLESS SIMULATIONS."

"SIMULATIONS? MAYBE I SHOULD--"

"NO, ATOMIC ROBO. THIS IS THEIR FIRST BATTLE. NO ONE CAN FIGHT IT FOR THEM."

VROOOOM

TOKYO BAY

"BESIDES, THEY HAVE EVERY POSSIBLE ADVANTAGE OF INTELLIGENCE AND TECHNOLOGY THAT I COULD HAVE HOPED FOR WHEN I FIRST FACED DR. SHINKA'S ***CREATIONS.***

BOOM

"THEIR SUITS ARE MADE OF A META-MATERIAL COMPUTATIONAL FABRIC. WE CALL IT REFLEX ARMOR.

"A SINGLE LAYER HAS THE STOPPING POWER OF AN INCH OF LEAD. THERE IS ALSO A SUITE OF STRENGTH AND SENSORY ENHANCEMENTS.

SKREEEE

VRRRR WHAM MMM

SKREEEE

<NO HOT DOGGING, GUARDIAN RED. STAY FOCUSED.>

<THEY'RE ONLY DRONES, DR. YUMENO.>
<YEAH, THEIR BIOMEGA LEVELS PEAK AT *EIGHT POINT SIX.*>
<GUARDIAN YELLOW IS RIGHT. OUR MOST *BASIC* SIMULATIONS *START* AT LEVEL TEN!>
<THIS IS THE FIRST BIOMEGA EVENT IN *FIFTEEN YEARS.* IT IS BY *DEFINITION* ATYPICAL. STAY ALERT AND GIVE NO QUARTER!>
<OKAY, TEAM...>
<...TAKE 'EM OUT!>
THWOK
KRAK
KLUD
THOK

Y'KNOW, DOC, THERE'S ABOUT A DOZEN APPLICATIONS FOR THE TECHNOLOGIES IN THOSE SUITS. COMBINED, IT'D SOLVE YOUR BUDGET PROBLEM SEVERAL TIMES OVER. AND THAT'S NOT INCLUDING MILITARY USES.

NOT YET. EACH SUIT COSTS NINE HUNDRED MILLION YEN TO PRODUCE AND REQUIRES FIFTY HOURS OF MAINTENANCE FOR EACH HOUR OF OPERATION.

THAT'S... LESS THAN IDEAL.

YES. WE ARE WORKING ON THAT.

<ANYONE ELSE FEEL LIKE THIS IS ENTIRELY TOO EASY?>

<I'D SAY IT'S EXACTLY EASY ENOUGH!>

<JUST THINK OF IT AS A FIELD TEST, GUARDIAN GREEN.>

<DR. YUMENO, WE ARE CLEAR. CAN YOU CONFIRM?>

<ECHO STATIONS REPORT ZERO LEVELS.>

フジテレビ

<RETURN TO BASE. AND BRING BACK SAMPLES. I WANT TO FIND OUT WHY THEY'RE HERE NOW.>

<YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE. NEWS VANS ARE ALREADY PULLING UP.>

DOC, THESE READOUTS ARE FOR SCIENCE TEAM SUPER FIVE, RIGHT?

OKITA
HARUTA
SHIMA
TOKITA
TACHIBANA

HMM? YES, THE SUITS MONITOR THEIR HEALTH IN REALTIME.

SO, WHY'RE THEY BLANK?

<GUARDIAN RED, GUARDIAN RED! IS IT TRUE THERE WAS A BIOMEGA ATTACK AFTER ALL THESE YEARS?>

A MAL-FUNCTION...?

IN ALL **FIVE** SUITS? DOESN'T SEEM LIKELY.

NO, IT DOES NOT. A ***DEAD*** GUARDIAN WOULD BROADCAST BASELINE STATIC, BUT WE'RE RECEIVING NO SIGNALS AT ALL.

LIKE THEY'RE BEING INTERCEPTED.

...OR ***BLOCKED.***

<...NO DANGER. OUR SENSOR ARRAYS CAN PINPOINT EVEN THE ***WEAKEST*** BIOMEGA SIGNAL ***ANYWHERE*** IN JAPAN.>

UUWAAAUGH!

<UH, GUYS?!>

GROOOOOSH

WHY DO WE EVEN **HAVE** THE SQUARE CUBE LAW?

A BIOMEGA BEAST! BUT *HOW?!*

FIGURE IT OUT LATER. WHAT'S THE FASTEST WAY TO GET ME OUT THERE?

TAKE THE COMPANY CAR.

<GET EVERYONE TO SAFETY!>

<WHERE DO YOU SUGGEST, THE MOON?>

<JUST DO IT! I'LL HOLD IT BACK.>

KROOOSH

<GUARDIAN RED!>

<GO! HURRY!>

<YUMENO!>

<WHAT--?!>

I'M NEARLY THERE. HOW'S IT COMING, DOC?

I SHOULD BE ABLE TO LOCALLY FILTER OUT THE COUNTER-SIGNAL THAT'S MASKING THE BIOMEGA LEVELS.

SKREEEEE

DETECTION RANGE WILL BE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED, BUT SHORT OF RECONFIGURING EVERY ECHO STATION, THIS IS OUR BEST OPTION.

IT IS DONE. FIRST FIGURES SHOULD BE COMING UP...

NO. ***IMPOSSIBLE.*** TWO-HUNDRED. ITS BIOMEGA LEVEL IS ***TWO-HUNDRED.***

AND WHAT DOES THAT MEAN TO ME?

THE REFLEX ARMOR CANNOT WITHSTAND BIOMEGA OF THAT MAGNITUDE! ATOMIC ROBO, YOU **MUST** BRING BACK SCIENCE TEAM SUPER FIVE BEFORE THEY ARE **KILLED!**

<YOU ARE NOT YUMENO!>

SKREEEECH

TWOING

UING

DR. YUMENO HAS SOMETHING LIKE A PLAN. ALL FIVE OF YOU NEED TO GET BACK TO BASE NOW.

SPLAT!

WHOK

UH... FOUR MIGHT BE ENOUGH.

<YOUR FACE. I'VE SEEN YOU BEFORE. IN THE *ARCHIVES!* YOU'RE DR. SHINKA!>

<PITIABLE WELP.>

<SHOW YOURSELF, *YUMENO!* LET US FINISH IT!>

<GUARDIAN RED IS ALIVE!>

IS IT ME, OR DOES IT KEEP SAYING "YUMENO"?

WAAH!

<NO...AFTER ALL THESE YEARS...>

1984

<...YOUR REIGN OF "BIOMEGA" TERROR IS AT AN END.>

<BIOMEGA IS THE FUTURE. I CANNOT BE STOPPED. I *WILL* NOT BE ST-->

BLAM

<DR. SHINKA MUST HAVE ***FUSED*** HIMSELF WITH A BIOMEGA TO SAVE HIS LIFE...>

<THAT WAS FIFTEEN YEARS AGO! WHERE'S HE BEEN?>

<THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN...GROWING, ***CHANGING*** INTO THE ***SHINKABEAST*** YOU SEE BEFORE YOU.>

<WE HAVE ONLY ONE HOPE TO STOP HIM. SCIENCE TEAM SUPER FIVE, YOU ***MUST*** RETURN TO HEADQUARTERS AT ONCE.>

<MOUNT UP, TEAM!>

ATOMIC ROBO, LURE SHINKABEAST TO THE COORDINATES I UPLOADED TO YOUR PERSONAL GPS.

HOLD IT, I'M THE BAIT?

SKRFEEEEEF

I DON'T LIKE THIS PLAN ANYMORE...

GUWAARK!

WHY AREN'T YOU RUNNING YET?!

KRAKOOM

<YOU CANNOT HIDE, YUMENO! NO ONE CAN!>

HEY!

<BIOMEGA IS THE *PINNACLE* OF EVOLUTION! THE DESTINY OF ALL LIFE!>

THE MORE YOU TALK, THE BETTER I FEEL ABOUT NEVER LEARNING JAPANESE.

FWAM

DAH! THAT WAS MY FACE!

<ACTIVATION KEY: DR. YUMENO. DELTA, UPSILON, NU, ALPHA.>

<KEY ACCEPTED>

<CAPACITORS ARE UP.>

<ACTUATORS POWERED.>

<DYNAMIC BALANCERS READY.>

<LOCO-MOTIVE MATRIX ENGAGED.>

<ALL SYSTEMS ARE GO. DEPLOY *MECHA ROBO!*>

DID SOMEONE SAY "MECHA ROBO?"

<--TOPPLE THESE MONUMENTS TO A DEAD WORLD! BIOMEGA IS THE *FUTURE!>*

KRONK

IT IS OUR--

HOLD ON A SEC, DOC.

FWAM

AURGH!

SORRY, HAD TO THROW A COPIER AT HIM. GO AHEAD

IT IS OUR EXPERIMENTAL ACTION SCIENCE PLATFORM.

YOU'RE POWERING UP SOME KINDA ATOMIC BREATH, AREN'T YOU.

OF COURSE. WHY **WOULDN'T** YOU HAVE THAT?

THOOM

KAFOOOOM!

DOC, A LITTLE HELP.

APOLOGIES, ATOMIC ROBO. WE ARE HAVING TROUBLE ALIGNING THE GIANT RAIL GUN.

YOU HAVE A GIANT RAIL GUN?

TECHNICALLY IT IS A PROTOTYPE SMALL PAYLOAD ORBITAL LAUNCH VEHICLE. WE ARE BORROWING IT FROM THE ISAS.

YOUR **SPACE AGENCY** HAS A WORKING MASS DRIVER?

WE WILL FIND OUT.

<CAREFUL, WIND'S ACTING UP.>

<COMPENSATING.>

<MANUDUCTIVE ACTUATORS ONLINE. LOCK IN SEVEN SECONDS.>

<ALL WILL BE ONE! ALL WILL BE BIOMEGA!>

KROOOM

I WISH GIANT MONSTERS WERE AS IMPOSSIBLE AS THEY'RE **SUPPOSED** TO BE...

<CONNECTIONS ARE SECURE. ALL REACTORS ONLINE.>

<WE'RE GOING TO DRAW POWER FROM EVERY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN JAPAN. THE GUN WILL LIKELY MELT AS IT FIRES, SO WE ONLY HAVE ONE SHOT.>

NEARLY THERE, DOC.

<HIP ACTUATORS SYNCHED. START MOTIVE SEQUENCE, RIGHT LEG.>

<EASY, EASY. GOOD...>

<ONE SMALL STEP FOR A 'BOT. ONE GIANT 'BOT FOR MANKIND.>

WRR

<MECHA ROBO-- GO!>

KLONG

<TOTAL GYRO FAILURE. REBOOTING!>

<TARGETING SYSTEM IS THROWING UP ERRORS. SWITCHING YOU TO MANUAL, GUARDIAN RED.>

<ROGER.>

<RUNNING HIKARU ALGORITHM. WE'LL BE UP AND BRACED TO FIRE IN SIX SECONDS.>

WE'RE CUTTING THIS A LITTLE CLOSE, GUYS!

<YOU ARE AN INSECT IN THE FACE OF BIOMEGA!>

THOOM

AIM HIGHER! JUST A LITTLE HIGHER!

CRASH

KROOOM

FZZZK

SKRAZK

BLORCH

SPLUT

<...BIOMEGA... FOREVER.>

WHATEVER YOU'RE SAYING, I DON'T CARE, BECAUSE YOU'RE DEAD.

UH, DOC? YOUR RAIL GUN WORKED GREAT BY THE WAY.

THAT IS GOOD. DID SHINKABEAST EXPLODE YET?

YET?

KRAKOOM

FWAM

SON OF A--!

SO, CAN WE START TALKING ABOUT MY LASER PROBLEM NOW?

END

THINK I SPOTTED SOME MOVEMENT NEAR THE TREE LINE. GOING IN FOR A CLOSER LOOK.

SIXTY-SEVEN MINUTES AGO

...HIKERS REPORTED A *LIZARD MAN.* IT WAS NONSENSE. UNTIL LAST WEEK WHEN WE STARTED TO SEE EXPLOSIONS ON TARAVAI.

THAT'S UNUSUAL.

VERY. TARAVAI IS *UNINHABITED.*

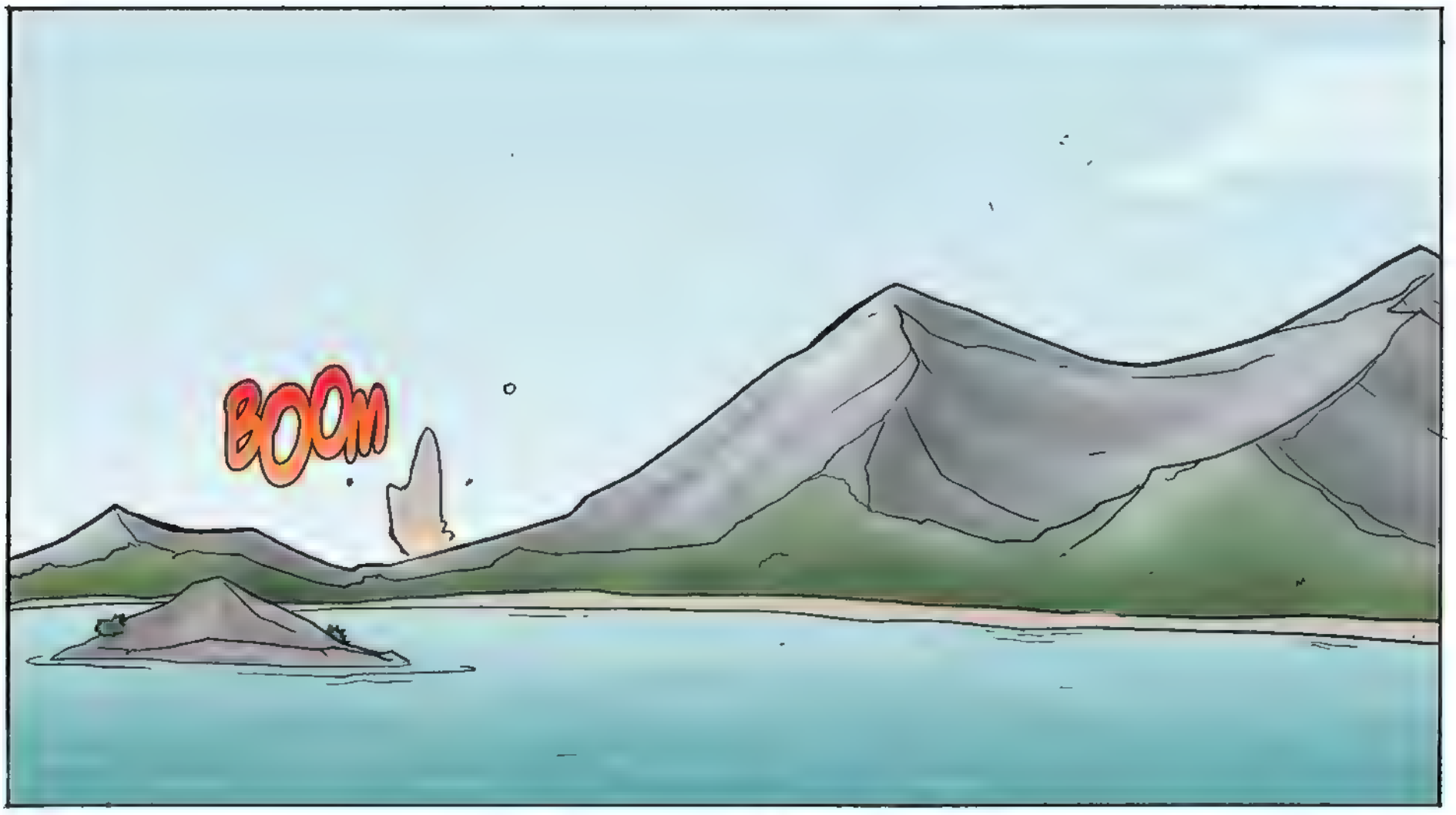
SHROOOH

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT LIZARD MEN, BUT *SOMETHING* ON THAT ISLAND IS A THREAT TO MY CITIZENS.

YEAH, I'D LIKE TO START WITH A FLY-BY, IF POSSIBLE.

--COMPLETE LOSS OF AVIONICS, ATTEMPTING EMERGENCY--

Other Strangeness
Chapter 3
Why Dr. Dinosaur Hates Atomic Robo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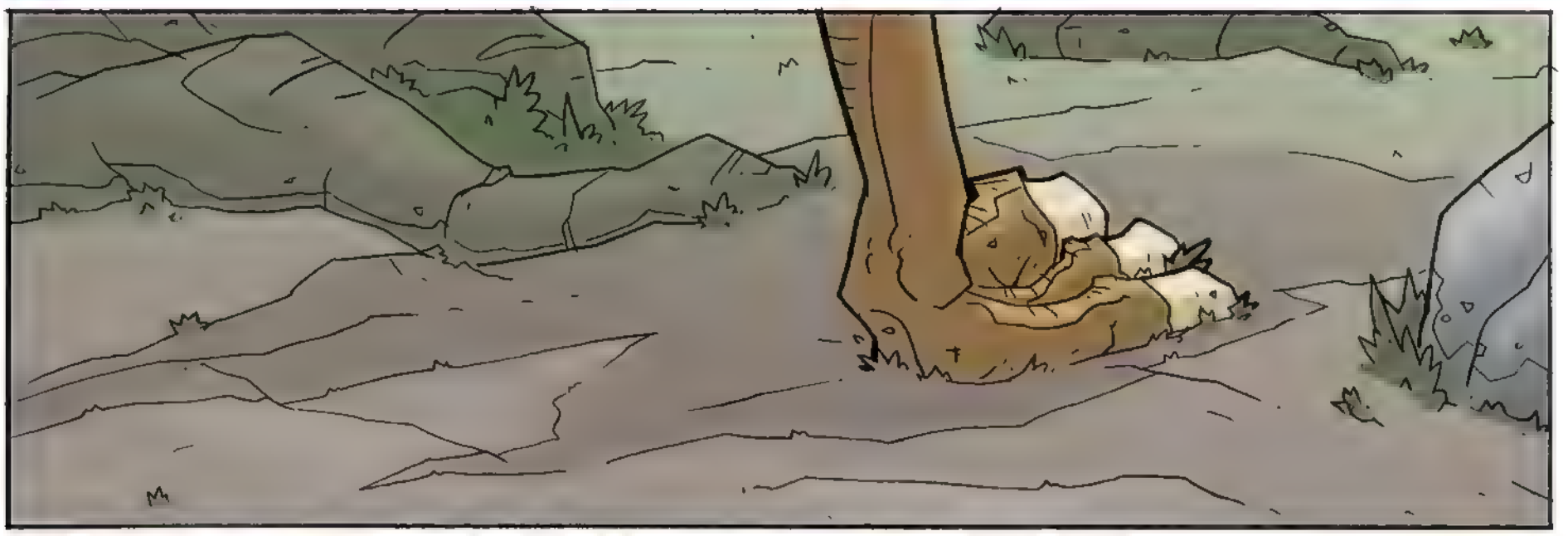
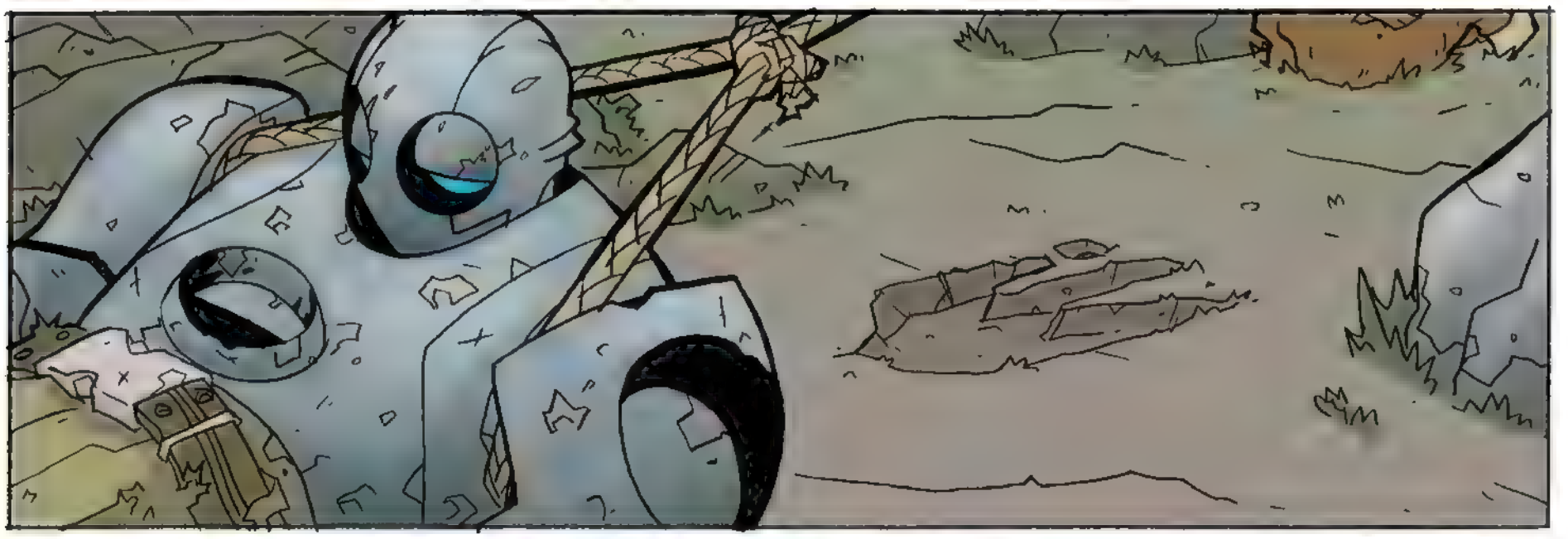
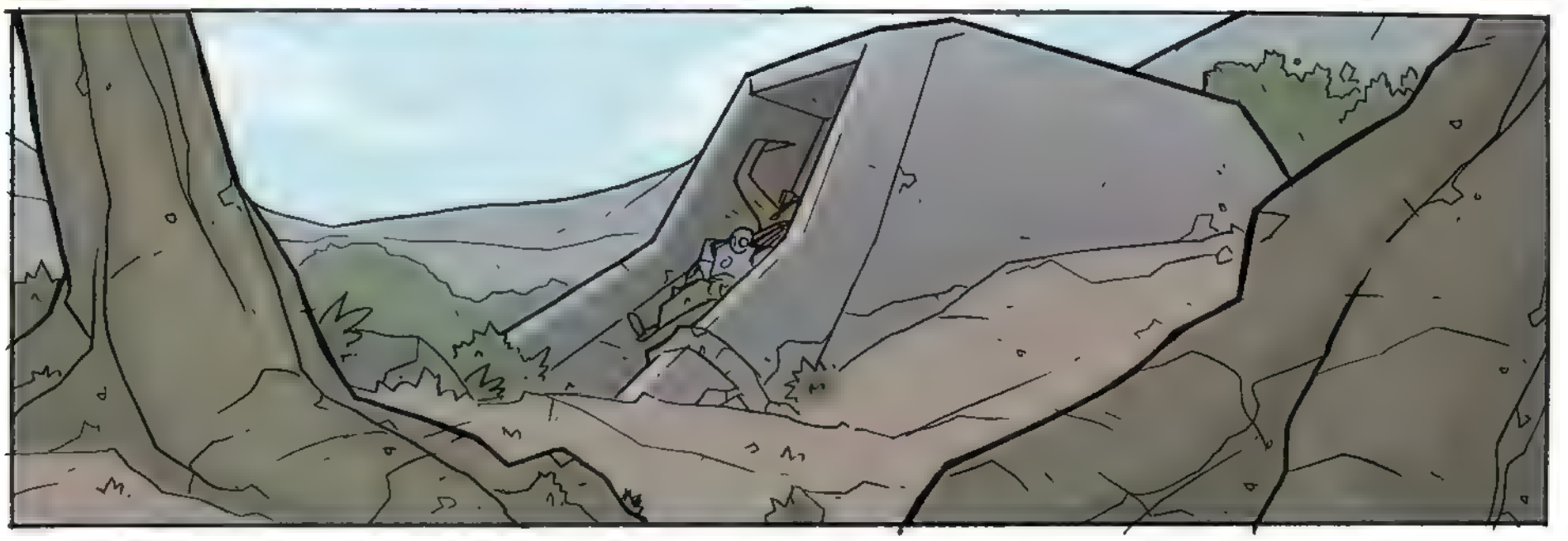






15 HOURS LATER

SO, THIS IS WHAT YOU CALL A BRILLIANT PLAN?

I AM A GENIUS. BY DEFINITION ALL OF MY PLANS ARE BRILLIANT!

THAT'S TERRIFIC. AND WHAT'S THIS BLUE LIGHT, SOME KIND OF **CRYSTAL-POWERED** ELECTRO-MAGNETIC FIELD?

DO NOT BE RIDICULOUS. THE LIGHT IS FOR *AMBIENCE.*

TEK

TEK

BESIDES, AN ELECTROMAGNETIC CRYSTAL WOULD BE FAR TOO LARGE TO FIT WITHIN THIS FACILITY. NO, YOU ARE TRAPPED IN AN ANTI-GRAVITY BOTTLE OF MY OWN BRILLIANT DESIGN!

ALSO CRYSTAL-POWERED?

THAT'S FUNNY, BECAUSE IT'S PLUGGED INTO THE WALL.

SO MANY CRYSTALS!

PLUGGED INTO CRYSTALS!

THE MORE YOU TALK, THE MORE EMBARRASSED I AM THAT YOU ACTUALLY CAPTURED ME.

BAH! OF COURSE I DID. I HAVE STUDIED YOU USING THE PRIMITIVE VIDEO BROADCAST SYSTEM EMPLOYED BY YOUR INFERIOR MAMMAL SOCIETY.

BEHOLD! THE BETAMAX TAPES!

IT WAS A SIMPLE MATTER FOR MY *ASTOUNDING REPTILIAN INTELLECT* TO CALCULATE YOUR *SEVENTEEN* MOST LIKELY REACTIONS TO ANY GIVEN SITUATION.

THE FIRST *ELEVEN* ARE NOTHING BUT MILD VARIATIONS ON PUNCH, SHOOT, AND JUMP. YOU ARE A SIMPLE CREATURE EVEN BY *MAMMAL* STANDARDS.

UH-HUH. D'YOU GET PAY-PER-VIEW ON THAT THING?

ALL OF THE HUMAN VIDEO WAVELENGTHS ARE OPEN TO ME! THE NICKELODEON IS FUZZY, BUT *IT TOO* WILL CRUMBLE AND *FALL* BEFORE THE HEAVY WEIGHT OF MY *GENIUS!*

*OKAY, LET'S JUST GET ON WITH IT. WHAT'S THE NEXT PART OF YOUR PLAN? **ANNOYING** ME TO DEATH? BECAUSE **THAT'S** WORKING.*

OH, NO. YOU HAVE EARNED A FAR WORSE FATE FOR YOUR *IMBECILIC* ATTEMPT TO UNDO MY MASTER PLAN ONE *HUNDRED MILLION YEARS* IN THE MAKING!

*YOU ARE **NOT** A TIME TRAVELER.*

AM SO!

*"AM SO?" **THAT'S** YOUR BIG COMEBACK?*

SILENCE! I CONTROL BOTH THE EBB AND THE FLOW OF THIS CONVERSATION!

ebb

FLOW

BEHOLD!

YOU...JUST KEEP GETTING **STUPIDER** AND STU--

CLICK

ebb

FLOW

WRONG

ARGH!

ZKZARK

CLACK

ebb

FLOW

THAT WAS THE EBB. *PRAY* THAT I DO NOT DEMONSTRATE MY MASTERY OVER THE **FLOW.**

SORRY, YOU'RE NOT STUPID.

JUST A LITTLE INSANE.

NO!

INSANE WITH GENIUS!

AND WITH THAT GENIUS--WHICH IS APPROXIMATELY EQUAL TO 500 OF YOUR MAMMAL IQ POINTS--I WILL LAY WASTE TO THE HUMAN WORLD TO USHER IN A NEW ERA OF PREHISTORIC REPTILIAN DOMINATION! THIS IS IRONIC ON SEVERAL LEVELS!

BUT FIRST I AM GOING TO TAKE YOU APART, PIECE BY PIECE, AND MAIL YOUR HEAD TO AN IMPORTANT GOVERNMENTAL BODY.

HOW?

My plan

box

box

Mail

Mail

U.N. build

WITH SCIENCE!

NO, I MEAN, YOU LIVE IN AN ABANDONED TOP SECRET MILITARY BASE ON AN **UNINHABITED** ISLAND. AND IT'S NOT LIKE YOU CAN JUST **WALK** INTO A POST OFFICE. HOW ARE **YOU** GOING TO **MAIL** MY HEAD **ANYWHERE?**

SKUFF

THAT IS FOR ME TO KNOW AND **FOR YOU TO DIE!**

THAT'S NOT EVEN A SENTENCE.

THE SIMPLE MAMMALIAN SUBJECT **AND** PREDICATE WERE BOTH REPRESENTED! I **CHALLENGE** YOUR CLAIM.

OKAY, FINE. WHAT IS THIS ILL-CONCEIVED POSTAL GESTURE WITH MY HEAD SUPPOSED TO ACCOMPLISH ANYWAY?

IT WILL BE A SIGN TO ALL HUMANITY THAT THEIR PATHETIC CIVILIZATION IS NAUGHT BUT **FLOTSAM** IN THE GREAT SEA OF HISTORY AND THE DINOSAURS ARE READY TO **RECLAIM** THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE AS **KINGS OF THE WORLD!**

THEY'LL GET ALL THAT FROM A HEAD IN A BOX?

DO NOT BE *INANE*. I SHALL INCLUDE A NOTE.

THIS IS a SIGN TO ALL HUMANITY THAT YOUR PATHETIC CIVILIZATION IS NAUGHT BUT FLOTSAM IN THE GREAT SEA OF HISTORY. THE dINOSAURS ARE READY TO RECLAIM OUR RIGHTFUL PLACE AS KINGS OF THE WORLD!

SINCERELY,
H'SSSSK

HOW DO YOU PRONOUNCE THAT?

THE WAY IT IS SPELLED: *H'SSSSK!*

WHAT, *SERIOUSLY?* IS THAT A NAME OR SOMETHING STUCK IN YOUR *THROAT?*

IT IS A GOOD AND PROPER NAME!

"HHHTHHHK?" C'MON, IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE GOT A *HAIRBALL.*

H'SSSSK! IT IS *H'SSSSK!* NOT "HHTHHHK"! *COMPLETELY* DIFFERENT!

THAT'S THE **PROBLEM,** ISN'T IT. HUMANS CAN'T MAKE THAT DISTINCTION. IT'S JUST A NOISE TO THEM. YOU NEED A **REAL** NAME. Y'KNOW, A **PRONOUNCEABLE** ONE.

HRRRMMMM...

HEY, I'M TRYING TO **HELP.** BUT NO, BY ALL MEANS, GO AND LOOK LIKE A **MORON** IN FRONT OF ALL THE MAMMALS.

!!!

IF THIS IS TRICKERY...

"HOW COULD IT BE TRICKERY?"

YEAH, WE'RE PRACTICALLY ON TOP OF ROBO'S LAST KNOWN LOCATION. GIMME A MINUTE AND I'LL HAVE A FIX ON HIS SIGNAL.

AND WHAT'RE WE DOING WHEN WE FIND HIM?

WE GET HIM *BACK.*

LOOK, YOU'RE GOING TO BE TALKED ABOUT IN NEWSPAPERS AND ON TV. YOU NEED A BRAND. A NAME THAT CAN'T BE SPELLED WON'T CUT IT.

YES, YES, FINE! WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?

OKAY, WELL. RULING THE WORLD. REIGN OF THE DINOSAURS. THAT'S YOUR THING, RIGHT? SO LET'S HIT THEM WITH SOMETHING IMPERIOUS. ***DINOKING!***

NO GOOD?

IT IS TERRIBLE. WHAT ABOUT **LORD RAPTOR?**

EHH. I WASN'T GOING TO BRING IT UP, BUT NOW THAT IT'S OUT THERE...WE NEED TO **AVOID** THE "RAPTOR" ANGLE.

WHY IS THIS?!

Y'KNOW, IT JUST...IT **HURTS** YOUR CREDIBILITY AS A SUPER GENIUS TIME TRAVELING DINOSAUR IF WE DRAW ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT YOU'RE MODELED AFTER AN ENTIRELY **FICTIONAL** SPECIES FROM THE JURASSIC PARK MOVIE.

LIES! YOUR MAMMAL FILM IS NOTHING BUT **PROPAGANDA** AND **LIES!** I'M A HISTORICALLY ACCURATE VELOCIRAPTOR! SCIENCE FACT!

OKAY, BUT THE FOSSIL RECORD SHOWS YOU'RE ABOUT **TWICE** AS LARGE AS A **REAL** ONE, SO...

YOUR **MEAGER** UNDERSTANDING OF THE **GLORIOUS** REIGN OF THE DINOSAURS IS **RIDDLED** WITH MIS-CONCEPTIONS! T-REX DID NOT EVEN **SOUND** LIKE IN THE MOVIE!

LOOK, WE'RE **WAY** OFF-TASK. WE GOTTA NAME YOU. FORGET I BROUGHT IT UP.

AND I WON'T EVEN MENTION THAT ALL RAPTOR SPECIES ARE KNOWN TO BE FEATHERED.

=KRHK!=

OR THAT ALL OF THEM DIED OUT **MILLIONS** OF YEARS **BEFORE** T-REX APPEARED, SO YOU DON'T KNOW **WHAT** THEY SOUNDED LIKE.

=GHK!=

Y'KNOW THIS ISN'T EVEN MY **FIELD?** I PICKED IT UP FROM DISCOVERY CHANNEL. THIS IS STUFF **CHILDREN** KNOW.

BEHOLD THE SUPERIOR DINOSAUR SCIENCE OF LORD RAPTOR!

BZZZRRRRRR

BOOM

SO MUCH FOR THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE.

THE EXPLOSION *WAS* THE SURPRISE.

OKAY, WHAT THE HELL IS *THAT?*

HRUFF?!

SOME KINDA DOCTOR *DINOSAUR?*

GUYS? SHOOT HIM.

BRAKKA DAKKA DAKKA

SPOW

SPANG

PWANG

TSCH

TKOW

TREACHERY! MAMMAL TREACHERY!

ZHRZZ-Z

UGH, FINALLY. ALL THE ELECTRICITY WAS RUSHING TO MY HEAD.

KRICT KRAKT

OHH, YOU LOOK HEAVY.

GRAB

SPOW

TWANG

SPKOW

JENKINS, GO **AFTER** HIM.

ON IT.

KOA, JULIE, CIRCLE AROUND AND **CUT HIM OFF.**

"DON'T LET HIM TALK, JUST **SHOOT.**

TOSS

"HE'S PSYCHOTIC AND **REALLY** ANNOYING."

!

NFF!

SLAM

BKOOM

BOOM

HE'S A MORON, BUT HE'S CUNNING. I'LL GO FIRST.

CLEAR.

AH. I SEE.

SLAM

BRACE FOR--

KRA-BOOM

DON'T MOVE.

YES, I GIVE UP. COME *HERE* AND CAPTURE ME WITH YOUR *DISGUSTING* FOREPAWS.

URGH...

ROBO? HE GOT AWAY.

WHAT-- *HOW?!*

I DON'T WANT TO SAY...

HE CAN'T HAVE GONE FAR. JENKINS, COLLECT THE OTHERS AND MEET ME AT THE CHOPPER.

KA-BOOOM

SPLOF

WE'RE LEAVING. NOW.

HE'S DEAD. AND YOU WATCH TOO MANY MOVIES.

WHAT ABOUT THE TALKING RAPTOR?

CHOPPA CHOPPA CHOPPA CHOPPA

WHY DR. DINOSAUR HATES ATOMIC ROBO

WRITTEN BY BRIAN CLEVINGER
ART BY SCOTT WEGENER
COLORS BY RONDA PATTISON
LETTERS BY JEFF POWELL
EDITS BY LEE BLACK

NOW IT'S MY TURN!

END

Other Strangeness
Chapter 4
Incandescent Soul

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING, 1999

TESLADYNE HQ, 3:13AM

GET SOME REST, DOC.

YOU KNOW IT.

AAAAAHHH!

EMPIRE STATE

THE NEXT MORNING...

CANCEL MY APPOINTMENTS.

ROBO, WE--

I DON'T CARE IF THE **SINGULARITY** HAPPENED WHILE I WAS OUT AND THE **MECHA POPE** WANTS TO TALK.

NOT TODAY, JERRY.

OKAY, BUT THERE'S--

WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?

OH, THAT? THAT'S OUR ***GHOST.*** HE'S NEW.

THREE HOURS LATER...

TESTS ARE IN. GOOD NEWS! YOU'RE DEFINITELY HUMAN.

WAS...THAT A CONCERN?

LOTS OF THINGS CONCERN US, BERNARD. LIKE HOW AND WHY YOU FOUND A GHOST.

I DON'T KNOW! I DON'T EVEN BELIEVE IN GHOSTS!

BUT THEN AGAIN, LAST WEEK I DIDN'T BELIEVE IN VAMPIRES EITHER...

YEAH, WELL, I DIDN'T BELIEVE IN TALKING DINOSAURS AND LOOK WHERE THAT GOT ME.

I... WHAT?

HE'S CLEAN, BUT LET'S KEEP HIM UNDER OBSERVATION. HE MAY BE OUR **ONLY** LINK TO THIS THING IF WE LOSE IT.

OF COURSE.

ANY DEVELOPMENTS?

THE APPARITION APPEARS TO PHASE FROM ONE LOCATION TO ANOTHER EVERY SIXTEEN HOURS. IT'S ALWAYS REAPPEARED WITHIN ***TESLADYNE,*** BUT WE HAVE NO GUARANTEE IT WON'T EVENTUALLY EMERGE ON ***ANOTHER*** FLOOR.

THAT'S ALL I NEED. ***ANOTHER*** GRIEVANCE FROM THE NEIGHBORS.

DOHERTY AND SCHAEFER ARE SWEEPING FOR LATENT SIGNATURES, BUT SO FAR NOTHING MATCHES UP TO THE READINGS WE PULLED FROM IT DIRECTLY.

WHICH IS JUST AS WELL SINCE WE'RE STILL TRYING TO MAKE ***SENSE*** OF ***THAT*** DATA. IF I HAD ACCESS TO DR. FISCHER'S ***BRAIN MATTER,*** I COULD--

NO.

I WOULDN'T NEED ***MUCH.***

EVEN SO.

I LIKE TO THINK OF BRAIN SURGERY AS A **LAST DITCH** EFFORT.

IN THAT CASE, HOSKINS'S PREPARED SOME EXPERIMENTS.

Incorporeal ☐ Corporeal ☐

READY?

READY.

WFF

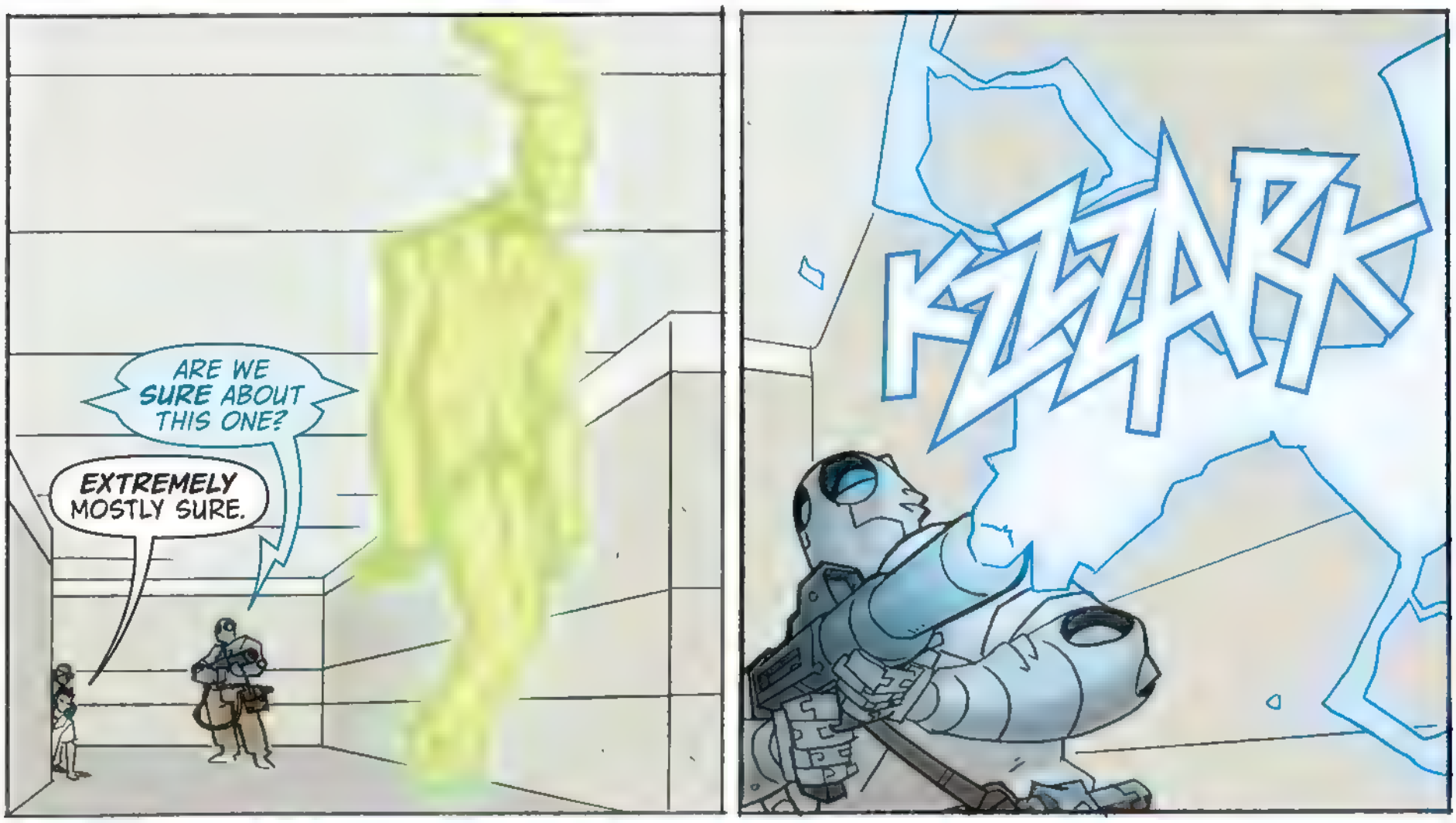
WOW!

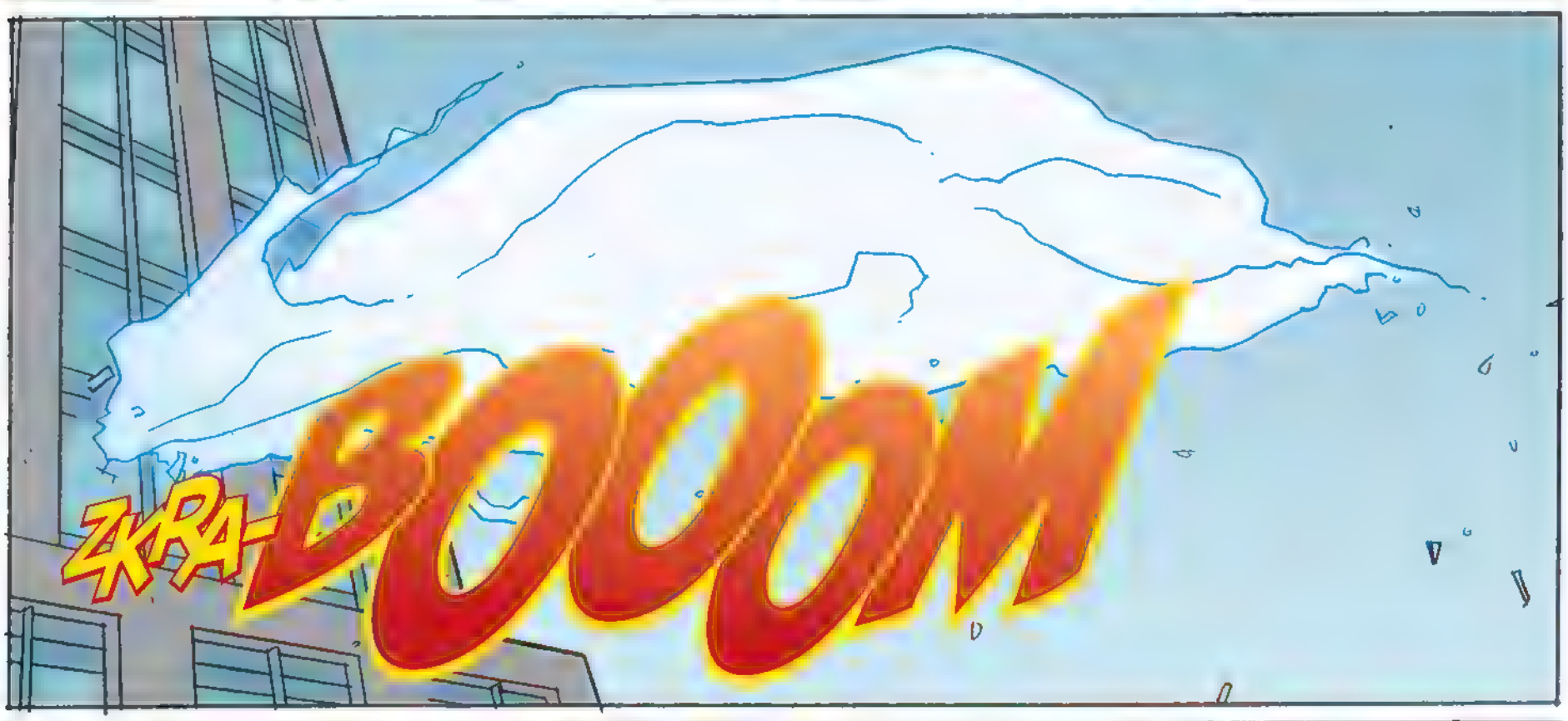
INTRIGUING.

Incorporeal ☑ Corp

Incorporeal ☑ Corporeal ☐

Electrodynamic response: _____





Corporeal ☐

ponse: Yes

LATER...

WHAT'VE WE GOT SO FAR?

FIRST, THE NEWEST GRADIOMETER RESULTS SUPPORT OUR PREVIOUS FINDINGS: NO GRAVITIC PERTURBATIONS CONCURRENT TO THE ENTITY.

IN ENGLISH.

IT'S MASSLESS.

THAT'S JUST ***WEIRD.***

IT GETS ***WEIRDER.*** WE HAVE EXPERIMENTALLY VERIFIED THAT THE ENTITY IS ***INCORPOREAL.*** WHICH IS IMPOSSIBLE.

HOW'S IT DO ***THAT?***

OUR CURRENT THINKING IS THAT IT DOESN'T INTERACT WITH THE STRONG ***OR*** WEAK NUCLEAR FORCES.

ALSO IMPOSSIBLE.

ARGUELLES

YOU'RE TELLING US IT *IGNORES* THREE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL FORCES? WHAT ABOUT ELECTRO-MAGNETISM?

LET'S JUST SAY IT'S ELECTROMAGNETICALLY *INERT.*

UH, THAT'S COMPLICATED

G'ON! GET OUTTA HERE!

I THOUGHT I FELT A DRAFT...

AND WE MEAN THAT AS *BROADLY* AS POSSIBLE. IT'S EFFECTIVELY INVISIBLE TO THE *ENTIRE* SPECTRUM.

TECHNICALLY WE SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO *SEE* IT.

IF WE *COULDN'T* SEE IT--

AND WE *SHOULDN'T.*

--WE'D HAVE NO REASON TO THINK IT OCCUPIES SPACE AND TIME *AT ALL.*

WHICH IT MAY *NOT.*

OKAY, SO WHAT DOES THIS ADD UP TO?

NOTHING. *LESS* THAN NOTHING. WE *STARTED* AT NOTHING AND IT'S BEEN DOWNHILL EVER SINCE.

IT'S EITHER A FORM OF HERETOFORE *UNTHINKABLY* EXOTIC MATTER, *OR* EVERYTHING WE KNOW ABOUT THE PHYSICAL LAWS OF THE UNIVERSE IS *COMPLETELY* WRONG.

ANYONE *ELSE* MISS THE VAMPIRES?

IT *COULD* BE A TEMPORAL SHADOW CAST INTO OUR TIME. *OR* A TRANS-DIMENSIONAL ECHO. BUT WE'VE NO METHODOLOGY TO TEST FOR THOSE.

*ACTUALLY, WE **MIGHT**. BUT IT'S DOWNTOWN.*

TESLADYNE STORAGE FACILITY, DOWNTOWN

BACK IN THE '70S THERE WAS SOME DIFFICULTY WITH A THING FROM OUTSIDE SPACE AND TIME. DR. SAGAN AND I USED THIS MACHINE TO "GRAB" IT FOR FURTHER STUDY.

SAGAN-TESLA SPECIAL TOPOGRAPHY? AND WHAT'S THIS ABOUT A *FIFTH* CARDINAL DIRECTION?

*UH, WE'LL TALK ABOUT THAT ON THE WAY **BACK**.*

LATER...

C'MON, GUYS. YOU SAID THIS VERSION WOULD BE EASIER TO BUILD.

TESLA

RUNNING THE FINAL CHECKS NOW.

IF WE MISS THIS CHANCE IT'LL BE ANOTHER **SIXTEEN HOURS** BEFORE HE COMES THROUGH HERE AGAIN.

ARGUELLES

THE GRID IS UP. I *THINK.*

IT OCCURS TO ME THAT THIS EQUIPMENT USES ***INCREDIBLY*** COMPLEX HYPERDIMENSIONAL MATH THAT HASN'T UNDERGONE PEER REVIEW. ARE YOU ***SURE*** IT'LL WORK?

EXTREMELY **MOSTLY** SURE.

I LIKE THOSE ODDS.

da-deet

WE GOT *INCOMING!* EVERYBODY *HIDE!*

NITIATING ZORTH MATRIX!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO *WHISPER!*

YOU ARE.

WELL, IT COULDN'T *HURT.*

HOSKINS

ZZKZZKRAKOW

SHOULD IT BE *DOING* THAT?

MAYBE.

ZKRAZZKRAK

FSSSHHH

HE *TALKS!*

WE'RE GETTING DATA. HE HAS *MASS.*

THEODORE...?

SIR, YOU'VE JUST EXPERIENCED A HYPERSPATIAL INTERSECTION VIA THE FIFTH CARDINAL DIRECTION. YOUR DISORIENTATION IS *PROBABLY* VERY NATURAL. CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT *DAY* IT IS?

UH. NOW WHAT?

OCTOBER, THIRTY-ONE...

ODIC...

YOU'RE THOMAS EDISON!

THAT'S NOT SOME THING YOU SEE EVERY DAY.

NOTHING ABOUT TODAY IS SOMETHING YOU SEE EVERY DAY.

YOU DID THIS TO ME! YOU AND THAT FOREIGN MANIAC TESLA!

HEY! YOU DID THIS TO YOURSELF, YOU CRAZY OLD BUZZARD!

YOU DESTROYED MY ODIC CAPACITOR! YOU DID THIS TO ME!

NO, WHAT I DID WAS SAVE SEVEN MILLION PEOPLE FROM YOUR REPREHENSIBLY UNSTABLE EXPERIMENT.

THE MACHINERY WAS WELL WITHIN

UNTIL YOU SABOTAGED MY EQUIPMENT!

TESLA

BECAUSE YOU WOULD'VE LEVELED EVERY BUILDING IN MANHATTAN TRYING TO GATHER DEBUNKED "VITAL ENERGIES"!

THE ODIC FORCE IS REAL! THE SPIRIT PHONE USES IT AS A TRANSMISSION MEDIUM! DEAR GOD IN HEAVEN, YOU JACKANAPES, I NEEDED ONLY TO DISTILL HALF A DRAM OF OD!

OH, I'M **SORRY.** IT WASN'T JUST YOU SELFISHLY ATTEMPTING TO EXTEND YOUR OWN LIFE AT THE EXPENSE OF **MILLIONS** OF OTHERS.

HOSKINS

IT WAS YOUR **LUDICROUSLY** SELF-ISH ATTEMPT TO DO THAT **AND** SELL **SNAKE OIL** TO EVERYONE IN THE WORLD!

UH, IS THIS AWKWARD FOR ANYONE ELSE, OR...?

REMINDS ME OF MY PARENTS AT PASSOVER.

UH, BUT ALSO WITH A ROBOT AND A GHOST.

ARGUELLES

SCHAEFER

MR. TESLA **DIED** FIFTY-SIX **YEARS** AGO.

IT'S NINETEEN NINETY-NINE. YOU'VE BEEN **DEAD** FOR OVER **SIXTY YEARS.**

TESLA

CONTAINMENT GRID IS FLUCTUATING. WE'RE *LOSING HIM!*

I CAN'T **BELIEVE** WE BROUGHT MY GREATEST ENEMY BACK TO LIFE.

TESLA

OH, HE ISN'T *ALIVE.*

BUT DEFINITELY NOT *DEAD,* EITHER.

SO, THOMAS EDISON'S UNDEAD? *UNDEAD EDISON.*

DOHERTY

TESLA

IS HE GONE?

LEVELS ARE BACK TO BASELINE. HE'S AS GONE AS WE CAN DETECT.

SO...DID WE JUST DO AN *EXORCISM?*

CURRENT DATA SUGGESTS EDISON'S CONSCIOUSNESS NOW PROPAGATES ALONG THIS SO-CALLED "*ODIC MEDIUM.*" WE'LL NEED TO RUN MORE TESTS TO DETERMINE WHAT THAT IMPLIES EXACTLY.

BUT WHY DID HE APPEAR NOW? WHY *HERE?*

THERE ARE *TOO MANY* UNKNOWNS TO SAY ANYTHING WITH CERTAINTY. IT MAY SIMPLY BE THAT TIME WORKS *DIFFERENTLY* THROUGH THE OD.

OR HIS MIND WAS LITERALLY *SCATTERED* ACROSS THE ODIC FIELD AND IT TOOK SEVENTY YEARS TO COLLECT HIMSELF, LIKE SOME KIND OF *ENDLESS* WAKING DREAM. THAT MIGHT EXPLAIN HIS TEMPORAL DISORIENTATION.

AND HE MAY HAVE BEEN DRAWN HERE BY ANY NUMBER OF FACTORS.

PURE CHANCE?

SOMETHING IN THE BUILDING'S LOCATION OR MAKEUP MAY HAVE A MINOR INFLUENCE ON ODIC FLOW.

AND THE VIEW FROM THE OBSERVATION DECK IS REALLY *NOT* TO BE MISSED.

OR HE SOUGHT YOU OUT SUBCONSCIOUSLY BECAUSE, Y'KNOW, THE HATRED.

ISN'T HE THOUGH?

HE'S NOT LITERALLY A GHOST.

HOSKINS

LET'S BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL WITH THE LANGUAGE WE USE TO DESCRIBE THE...UH...THE, ER...

UNDEAD EDISON.

ER, YES. THAT. WE'LL HAVE TO GO OVER TONIGHT'S READINGS TO HAVE ANY HOPE OF TRULY ANSWERING THESE QUESTIONS, BUT I DON'T THINK WE'RE EQUIPPED TO SAY ANYTHING SUBSTANTIAL VIS A VIS THE AFTERLIFE.

UNDEAD EDISON?

WISH YOU THOUGHT OF IT?

MAYBE A LITTLE

DOHERTY

NO, YOU'RE RIGHT. TOSSING AROUND "GHOST" WILL ONLY EMPOWER MEDIUMS AND OTHER PSEUDO-SCIENCE WACKOS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PEOPLE. WE SHOULD COUCH THESE PHENOMENON IN TERMS OF ODIC PERTURBATIONS.

CAN YOU GUYS HANDLE THE CLEANUP? I NEED SOME AIR.

SURE THING, ROBO.

TESLA

WAAAIT A SECOND. HE DOESN'T *BREATHE.*

LET 'IM BE.

ROBO?

OH, DR. FISCHER. WHAT BRINGS YOU UP HERE AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT?

OH, YOU KNOW. JUST CLEARING MY HEAD OF ALL THE VAMPIRE ATTACKS AND GHOSTS. YOU?

SAME, PLUS A HUMONGOUS MAN-CRAB MONSTER AND A GENETICALLY ENGINEERED DINOSAUR WHO THINKS HE'S **A:** A TIME TRAVELER AND **B:** SMART.

YOU'VE BEEN BUSY.

YEAH. OH, AND IT'S NOT A GHOST. IT'S A PERTURBATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN A PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN INCORPOREAL MEDIUM.

OH. UH, DOES THAT MEAN DR. ARGUELLES ***WON'T*** TAKE OUT A PIECE OF MY BRAIN?

PROBABLY.

WELL, ***THAT'S*** A RELIEF.

IS EVERY WEEK LIKE THIS?

NO. NO, SOMETIMES IT GETS **WEIRD.**

THOMAS EDISON NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK,
GLENMONT ESTATE, NEW JERSEY

END

MAY 7, 2011
BOSTON

HOW MANY HOSTILES?

VROOOOM

FIFTY. PLUS AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF BACK-UP.

IS THE MEDIA THERE?

YEAH. THEY'VE GONE LIVE.

THIS COULD GET BAD. FAST.

WHAT'S OUR ANGLE OF ATTACK?

EVERY ENTRANCE IS A NIGHTMARE. IF IT'S NOT BLOCKADED, IT'S A BOTTLENECK AROUND A **BLIND** CORNER.

WE CAN BLAST OUR WAY IN.

COLLATERAL DAMAGE IS UN-ACCEPTABLE.

WE HAVE TO GO IN THROUGH THE FRONT. JUST LIKE THEY WANT US TO.

WE'RE ON THEIR TERMS. NO WAY AROUND IT.

WE'RE HERE.

OKAY. I'M ON POINT. AND REMEMBER, NO ONE HAS TO DIE TODAY.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FAIR

REGIONAL 4TH GRADE FINALS

--AND BEHIND ME NOW YOU CAN SEE ONE OF THE CELEBRITY JUDGES OF THIS YEAR'S NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP, ***ATOMIC ROBO,*** AND JUST ***LISTEN*** TO THOSE CHEERS. ***DEFINITELY*** A FAVORITE AMONG THIS CROWD.

SCREEEECH

POLICE

ROBO!

HEY!

ROBO!

OVER HERE!

HEY, ROBO!

ROBO!

FASH

F-FASH

SCIENCE PAPARAZZI.

HUMAN *VULTURES.*

5 ISIE

TODAY IS THE DAY I BECOME AN *ACTION SCIENTIST.*

NAH-*UH.*

YES-*HUH.* I BUILT A TELLURIC INTERCHANGER AND IT'LL CHANGE *THE WORLD.*

NAH-*UH.*

5 ISIE

IT'S BASED ON THIS THING MY GRANDPA DESIGNED, HE WAS A SECRET SCIENCE AGENT BACK IN THE OLDEN TIMES WITH ATOMIC ROBO.

THAT'S *CHEATING.*

TELLURIC INTERCHANGER THE FUTURE *TODAY!*

IS *NOT.* THE WHOLE LAST PAGE OF GRANDPA'S NOTES WERE MISSING AND I HAD TO PUT IT TOGETHER ALL BY MYSELF, AND THEN FIGURE OUT HOW TO FINISH IT, AND I DID THAT WITH SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENTS *ALSO* ALL BY *MYSELF--*

--IT'S ALL THERE ON MY DISPLAY BOARD, THANK YOU--

--AND IT WORKS *GREAT,* SO THERE.

AND WHAT I'LL DO IS, WHEN ATOMIC ROBO COMES TO JUDGE MY PROJECT, HE'LL SEE IT'S THE *BEST* ONE AND HE'LL GO, LIKE, "WOW, WILL YOU JOIN ME AT TESLADYNE?"

AND I'LL BE LIKE, "YES, OF COURSE. P.S. TELL MY MOM AND DAD ABOUT HOW IT WAS OKAY TO BORROW PARTS FROM THE CAR FOR SCIENCE."

AND HE'LL TELL THEM AND THEY'LL BE ALL, "EMMA, YOU WERE RIGHT ALL ALONG," AND I'LL GO, "YES, I KNOW."

JUST LIKE THAT.

BET NOT.

BETCHA *SO.*

STATUS REPORT.

WE LOST JEFF.

DO YOU *REALLY* KNOW ROBO?

CAN I HAVE YOUR AUTO-GRAPH?

CAN YOU GET ME *ROBO'S* AUTOGRAPH?

WHERE'S YOUR *LIGHTNING GUN?*

WANNA SEE MY PROJECT?

WE DON'T LEAVE AGENTS BEHIND. TAKE JULIE AND GET HIM BACK.

ON IT.

I THINK THEY *GOT* ONE.

WHAT IF ROBO NEVER COMES OVER HERE?

HE WILL. HE *HAS* TO.

BETCHA NOT.

BETCHA SO.

HE'LL COME OVER HERE AND SEE MY PROJECT AND KNOW I'M A ***TOTAL SCIENCE MASTER*** AND TAKE ME OUT OF MY STUPID SCHOOL WITH MY STUPID TEACHER MRS. HENDERSON.

WHO, BY THE WAY, THINKS ***MERCURY*** IS HOTTER THAN ***VENUS*** BECAUSE MERCURY IS CLOSER TO THE SUN WHEN EVERYONE ***KNOWS*** VENUS IS THE HOTTEST PLANET IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM BECAUSE OF THE OUT OF CONTROL GREENHOUSE EFFECT OF ITS ATMOSPHERE.

OKAY, SHUT UP AND GET BACK TO ***YOUR*** PROJECT, ROBO'S COMING. THIS HAS TO GO ***PERFECT.***

BET IT WON'T.

SHUSH!

ISLE

ELLURIC
ERCHANGER
UTURE
TODAY!

OKAY, I'M GONNA NEED YOU TO, UH...

...MOVE?

URE
ODAY!

MAMMALIAN SPAWN-WORM! YOU DARE TO--

AAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHH!

YOU?!

YES, IT IS I! AND THIS IS ALL GOING ACCORDING TO PLAN--DO NOT QUESTION IT!

I KNEW YOU WOULD BE HERE, ATOMIC HOBO! WITNESS HOW I HAVE DECONSTRUCTED YOUR NAME INTO AN INSULT!

YEAH, WOW, NEVER HEARD THAT ONE BEFORE.

SHUT UP! I HACKED YOUR MAIN-FRAME AND DOWNLOADED YOUR ITINERARY. YES! ALL OF YOUR COMPUTERIZED SCHEDULING SECRETS ARE NOW MINE!

ISLE

YOU JOINED OUR NEWSLETTER!

YOU CAN'T PROVE THAT!

AH!

I'LL GET THE VAN.

I'LL STALL.

HOW'D A DINOSAUR GET GUNS?!

ONE WEEK AGO...

WE SELL GUNS

U.S.A. GUN SHOW!

NO BACKGROUND CHECKS
BUY ONE GET ONE FREE!

ALONSO'S GUN HUT

'FRAID I'M GONNA NEED T'SEE SOME I.D.

BARE

AMMO

ASK ABO

BIG BOOK OF DINOSAURS

DROMAEOSAURUS

AWRIGHT, LET'S RING Y'UP.

BABE

IN A PERFECTLY LEGAL MANNER IS HOW!

TELLURIC INTERCHANGER THE FUTURE TODAY!

MOREOVER, HOW'D YOU GET TO AMERICA?

BAH! I CAN TRAVEL IN BOTH TIME AND RELATIVE DIMENSIONS IN SPACE!

THAT'S THE TARDIS!

WHO'RE YOU?!

EMMA. HE STOLE MY SCIENCE FAIR PROJECT AND NOW HE'S DOING DOCTOR WHO REFERENCES AT YOU!

IT IS ONLY A COINCIDENCE! I DO NOT EVEN KNOW WHO TOM BAKER IS!

WHO'S TOM BAKER?

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH A CHILD'S SCIENCE FAIR PROJECT?

IT'S A TELLURIC INTERCHANGER BASED ON MY GRANDPA'S DESIGNS. BUT THAT'S NOT CHEATING BECAUSE I FIGURED OUT THE HARDEST PART ALL BY MYSELF.

IT'S ALL ON MY DISPLAY BOARD.

TELLURIC...

VICTOR ARMSTRONG HAD A FAMILY?

AND YOU FINISHED HIS LIFE'S WORK?

--REPORTS OF SOME KIND OF "LIZARD MAN" ARE--

NATIONAL SCIENCE FAIR
REGIONAL 4TH GRADE FINALS

WE DON'T MAKE A *MOVE* UNTIL ROBO GIVES THE WORD.

UNDER-STOOD.

BRATTATTATTA

THIS IS THE SOUND OF BULLETS KILLING YOU!

YOU CAN'T KILL ATOMIC ROBO WITH *BULLETS*, YOU BIG STUPID!

CAN'T SAY THE SAME FOR *YOU*, KID.

YONG

HE'S ON THE MOVE.

YOU NEED TO STICK--

--CLOSE TO ME.

AAAAHHHHH!

GET IT OFF, GET IT OFF, GET IT OFF!

GIVE IT BACK, GIVE IT BACK, GIVE IT BACK!

AH!

SNAP!

GOTCHA!

HSSSSSS!

OH, HSSSS YOURSELF.

HE'S CLEAR. GO, GO, GO.

KRASH!

AHHH!

HRUFF!

SKREEEEEE--

-EEEEECH

REMEMBER WHEN I SAID TO STICK CLOSE?

NOPE!

YEAH, THAT'S THE **PROBLEM.**

WE GET HIM?

MUST HAVE. LEMME, UH, GET THE KID AWAY SO YOU CAN, UH, **CONFIRM.**

AUGH! THERE'S DIRT AND GOO ***ALL OVER IT.*** I'LL HAVE TO RECALIBRATE THE ***WHOLE THING,*** AND I DON'T HAVE THE EQUIPMENT I ***NEED,*** AND IT'S NOT GOING TO ***WORK*** NOW SO YOU ***WON'T*** HIRE ME TO BE AN ACTION SCIENTIST, AND I'LL BE ***STUCK*** WITH ***STUPID*** MRS. HENDERSON ***FOREVER!***

UH, ***EMMA,*** IS IT?

I CAN'T ***HIRE*** YOU. YOU'RE WHAT, ***TEN?***

BUT, ***LOOK.*** ONE DAY, YOU'LL BE GROWN UP. AND IF YOU TAKE THE PASSION FOR SCIENCE AND LEARNING YOU HAVE ***NOW*** AND LET IT GROW UP ***WITH*** YOU, I'M SURE THERE'LL BE A PLACE AT TESLADYNE FOR YOU.

BUT, FOR ***NOW,*** WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME HOW YOU SOLVED EIFFEL'S PARADOX AND FINISHED THE JOB YOUR GRANDFATHER STARTED.

REALLY? ***OH!*** LEMME FIND MY DISPLAY BOARD. THERE'S GRAPHS AND ***EVERYTHING!*** MY DAD HELPED WITH THOSE.

JUMP

HMMM. DIRECTING WHEEL, VELOCIPOD, TORQUE SELECTOR...

SKREEEE

YOW!

HOLD YOUR FIRE!

BEHOLD! AN ORDINARY MOTORIST!

KRAOOM

BEEP BEEEED

COORDINATE WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE MILITARY.

HE WON'T BE HARD TO TRACK.

I'LL JOIN UP WHEN I'M THROUGH HERE.

TESLADYNE ISLAND
AUGUST 12, 2021

I GUESS YOU LIKED MY THESIS THEN?

EH. IT WAS OKAY.

ONLY OKAY?

THE GRAPHS WERE GOOD.

GONNA BE HONEST. MY DAD HELPED WITH THOSE.

HAVE BEEN FOR YEARS.

HE DOES GOOD WORK. READY FOR THE TOUR?

END

LEAP
BOUNCE
BEHOLD MY SUPERIOR AGILITY!
YOU'RE ABOUT TO BEHOLD MY FIST UP YOUR FACE!
UNLIKELY!
GET BACK HERE!
YOU FIRST!
THAT... WHAT?!
RASSAFRACKIN' SUB-BASEMENTS...
GRRRANK

ALL RIGHT. I GIVE. WHAT IS THAT?

BEHOLD! CRYSTALLIZED ANTI-GRAVITY!

THAT'S GREAT. I'M GOING TO SHOOT YOU.

IMBECILE! YOU'LL KILL US BOTH! THE CRYSTALS POWER THIS ENTIRE STATION!

I THOUGHT YOU SAID IT WAS THE ANTI-GRAVITY CRYSTAL.

IT CAN DO LOTS OF THINGS!

OKAY, WE'RE DONE HERE.